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ABSTRACT

The paper considers issues of educational and social reform suggested by the dual systems of teacher education, the preparation of regular teachers and the preparation of special education teachers (particularly those of the mildly handicapped). It is suggested that the existence of two teacher preparation university curricula allows general teacher preparation programs to avoid the responsibility of preparing prospective teachers to accommodate the usual range of students in the classroom and leads to artificial differences in pedagogical function, metacognitive function, and teacher expectations of student learning, despite the considerable overlap in instructional methodologies. The separation of the two disciplines is perceived as preventing regular dialogue on ideological issues between special and general educators at all levels. It is also suggested that this separation has led to the existence of unnecessary federal programs for the preparation of teachers of the mildly handicapped. The internal allocation of resources to the teacher education branch of special education is questioned. It is concluded that special education teacher educators have failed to demonstrate that programs for teachers of the mildly handicapped are unique or to show good reason for their reluctance to identify professionally with teacher education as a whole. (DB)

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**Special Education Categories as Constraints
on the Reform of Teacher Education**

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Author Note: The discussion in this paper refers only to the preparation of special education teachers in the area of mild handicapping conditions. This includes the traditional categories of learning disabilities, behavior disorders, and mild mental retardation, as well as generic categories of mild handicapping conditions whose categorical titles vary from state to state. Although it may have implications for their preservice education, the discussion is not directed toward the preparation of teachers for hearing and vision-impaired students, or the preparation of teachers for moderately, severely, multiply, or orthopedically impaired or severely emotionally disturbed students.

Categories of mild handicapping conditions obviously affect the way children are classified in schools; less obviously, by their very existence, they influence how the roles of prospective general and special education teachers are defined. In addition to creating classes of children, categorical structures also have created classes of teachers to instruct those children, each class assigned ostensibly to provide a special type of instruction to a special population of students. The assumption underlying the division of teachers into classes is that each possesses a special set of skills which can be applied appropriately only to students in the categories in which they are charged to instruct. At a purely administrative level, then, categorical programs of teacher preparation specifically for those who will teach students labeled mildly handicapped can be said to be a legal reflection of the categorical structure they serve: categories equate with special certification and special certification requires an identifiable teacher education program to enable instruction for identified populations.

However, if special education categories for children considered mildly handicapped are in fact constructed socially to provide social control in the schools, the roles for which general and special education teachers are prepared at the university may also be thought of as social constructions--and not simply legal reflections of the categorical structure. In light of this corollary, an equally serious examination of the ends that are served by the existence of separate university programs to prepare general and special education teachers also needs to occur. What patterns of influence exist? Whose interests are best served by the dual structure of teacher preparation? Who profits most by its existence? And finally, do these programs in truth complement each other, as they are meant to do, or do they represent parallel, similar instructional undertakings, ultimately serving the same roles under different names and disciplinary affiliations? Consideration of these issues

is especially pressing given the magnitude of current efforts to reform the preparation of general classroom teachers. Education professionals responsible for reform of teacher education should address the task with a full understanding of each of the political and organizational forces that may be at stake. One of the forces is special education.

What reforms do teacher educators wish to see implemented, and how do they relate to the preparation of special education teachers? In its 1985 report, "A Call for Change in Teacher Education," the National Commission for Excellence in Teacher Education cited among its many concerns the following goals:

- *. ...teachers need to understand how to select and present appropriate content and concepts, how to recognize the kinds of errors or difficulties students experience, and how to reteach difficult concepts.
- *. ...how to diagnose difficulties, how to select, develop, and use appropriate teaching strategies and materials, how to observe and analyze the performance of a variety of students (including students from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds...)
- *. ...they need to receive systematic instruction in the organized research and experience-based information about teaching, and know how to use the knowledge being generated through research on teacher and school effectiveness.
- *. ...they need to participate in detailed and repeated analysis and criticism of their own and others videotaped and live teaching.
(p.12)

In a later section, the National Commission also states that "teachers have limited autonomy and decision-making authority to produce the kinds of services that students need" (p. 27). Taking this list as representative, then, we may assume for the sake of discussion that reform efforts in teacher education require attention to pedagogy, to providing an adequate range of instructional approaches, to the responsibilities of classroom teachers for reteaching, and to increased professionalization of teaching through the use of research, increased professional autonomy, and professional

self-criticism. It is through reform in these areas, among others, that the quality of teaching should be improved.

This partial but fundamental set of goals raises at least three sets of questions about the preparation of special education teachers for the mildly handicapped. First, how legitimate are the boundaries which differentiate general and special education teacher preparation, and to what degree, if any, does the existence of special programs to prepare teachers for students labeled mildly handicapped affect how the responsibilities of teachers are conceptualized and communicated during preservice training? What limitations, if any, are imposed on the range of methodologies prospective classroom teachers are prepared to use by virtue of those which appear to belong exclusively into the domain of special education? And if such limitations do exist, are prospective teachers deprived in any way of the full complement of skills they will need to teach a reasonable diversity of students? Second, as teacher education struggles to identify, disseminate, and incorporate a credible research base into preservice programs, to what extent does a socially constructed division of university programs, and its associated discipline-specific knowledge, create inefficiency in solving the problems of teacher education? Are the opportunities of faculty members to understand teacher education phenomena in any way limited by the isolation imposed by discipline-bound programs? And finally, in an era of scarce resources, are human and fiscal energies being duplicated or dissipated in ways that detract from the improvement of teacher education?

The following analysis addresses these issues in an attempt to clarify the mutual patterns of influence between the systems that prepare regular and special education teachers. In considering these issues, it must be recognized that university departments which prepare teachers do not merely reflect the external need for categorical programs. Rather, in themselves,

they constitute organizational and political entities that help to shape and sustain the demand for their services.

Special Education University Curricula as Conceptual Constraints on Reform

How might the existence of programs to prepare teachers of the mildly handicapped affect our conceptualization of the responsibilities of classroom teachers? First, isolated preparation for special education teachers creates a safety valve; given its existence, programs of general teacher preparation need not accept full responsibility for preparing prospective teachers to accommodate the range of students they will encounter routinely in their classrooms. Although the literature of general teacher education espouses the importance of individualizing instruction to serve diverse groups of students successfully, attempts at implementation were accompanied by the development and expansion of teacher preparation programs for students identified as mildly handicapped, and particularly, learning disabled (see Wiederholt, 1974). Consequently, even though general teacher educators have attempted in good faith to prepare their graduates to work with diverse classes, in actuality the range of students with whom classroom teachers work was and continues to be truncated systematically, favoring those who readily achieve and behave according to the teacher's expectations. Students who do not, for a variety of reasons academic and behavioral, traditionally have been placed in classes for the learning disabled.

The convincing data regarding the misuse of the category of learning disabilities¹ illustrate the unlimited success with which special educators have socialized their colleagues teaching in general education classrooms to the belief that, as general classroom teachers, they do not possess the skills to handle routine variations in student ability. Not surprisingly, by their reliance upon special education, general classroom teachers seem to believe they have not been adequately prepared for the task. Ironically, this

situation exists at the same time that the composition of students in general classrooms has become even more diverse, requiring greater pedagogical skill on the part of classroom teachers than ever before (Haberman, 1985). It also comes at a time when critics of classroom teaching have repeatedly emphasized that a body of knowledge which might inform teacher education does finally exist, permitting, through exemplary management and instructional techniques, the accommodation of heterogeneous groups of learners (Good & Brophy, 1984; Emmer, Evertson et al., 1984; Hawley & Rosenholtz, 1984).

The relationship between the general and special preparation of teachers, then, can be thought of as a "gentlemen's agreement" that goes something like this: we (teacher educators in special education) will continue to prepare our graduates to accept the role of working with students who do not readily fit classroom teachers' conceptions of who they are prepared to teach, while we (general teacher educators) agree to insure that our graduates will be prepared from the outset to seek out and expect the services special education provides. As a result of this "arrangement," three fundamental and natural functions of classroom teaching have, by tacit agreement, been parcelled out in part or in full to special education: the pedagogical function, the metacognitive function, and the universal learning function. Each affects the conceptualization of general teacher education in a particular way.

Parcelling Out the Functions of Teaching

The three functions of teaching which in part or whole have fallen to special education represent three essential qualities that typically characterize effective teachers but that are not universally present in existing teacher education programs. Each function is essential for complementing general preservice programs in general teacher education, since by tradition they have been primarily content-based and have devoted less

attention to generic aspects of teaching than to subject matter. Let us consider each in detail.

The pedagogical function. The pedagogical function is twofold: it includes knowing and knowing how to use general principles of management and instruction, allowing classroom teachers to instruct at optimum levels of effectiveness across content areas, planning regularly for the use of varied instructional approaches to achieve successful student outcomes. Although recognition of the need for systematic preparation in pedagogy is certainly of primary concern to teacher educators (Berliner, 1985; Haberman, 1985), general pedagogical preparation that may be applied across content areas—including various research-based approaches like direct instruction, cooperative learning, strategy training, or principles of reinforcement—is not widespread (Goodlad, 1984). Preservice teacher education continues to be dominated by content area methodology, and the trend is to increase content studies at the expense of the study of pedagogy (Berliner, 1985).

Many plausible explanations exist for the traditionally weak emphasis on pedagogy in the preparation of classroom teachers, ranging from the absence, until recently, of a definitive research-base to the belief that pedagogy can best be learned from practical experiences in the schools. An additional possibility is that special education has helped schools to institutionalize a truncated range of student performance in general classrooms and teachers have therefore been deprived of the opportunity and need to learn how to work effectively with diverse student groups. The general teacher educator knows that, in another part of the building, or in another building on the university campus, special education teachers are being prepared to instruct students who do not readily succeed in general classrooms; this knowledge is likely to be a strong influence in discouraging general teacher education faculty from focusing on alternative pedagogical approaches and emphasizing

the responsibility for routinely using varied instructional and management strategies to meet diverse needs. Simply put, it has not been the job of general teacher education to do so. Faculty members may point regularly to isolated special education teacher training programs as resources when responding to their students' questions regarding what to do when a pupil won't x, y, or z, when a pupil is two years below grade level in reading or mathematics, etc., even though such differences are now commonplace in classrooms everywhere. In this context, it is teachers of special education who are expected to know which pedagogical approaches best apply in each situation.

But as a result of its historically isolated role, the content of programs for prospective special education teachers has remained largely a black box phenomenon to professors of general teacher education. The nature of the knowledge that is actually transmitted in programs that prepare special education teachers is not well-known to faculty in general programs of teacher preparation. There is a general sense that special education methodologies emphasize behavioral approaches and that this constitutes a major ideological barrier between regular classroom teachers and those who are prepared to teach students thought to be mildly handicapped.

In spite of the humanistic-behavioral rift that appears to characterize the relationship between programs, the training of special education teachers is by no means limited to preparation in behavioral methodologies. Many general strategies for management and instruction emerging from the work of general teacher education, among which at least some behavioral methodologies appropriately belong, appear routinely in special education programs for prospective teachers of the mildly handicapped. For example, a 1985 survey 100 of the largest university programs teachers of the learning disabled/mildly handicapped indicated that 88 percent of the programs

responding² included preparation in cooperative learning techniques, 85 percent included direct instruction, and 73 percent included preparation in metacognitive strategy training (Pugach, 1986). An additional 78 percent included work in principles of behavior modification. These methodologies are taught to preservice students who usually are not familiar with general education classrooms or with the literature of general teacher education and who typically believe that, as representatives of special education, they are uniquely qualified to offer appropriate instruction for students under their tutelage.

In addition to the teaching of general pedagogical strategies, special education teacher training programs also persist in teaching methodologies that supposedly offer a theoretical distinction from general teacher education; for example, 67 percent include remediation of psycholinguistic deficits, 66 percent include remediation of perceptual-motor deficits, and 60 percent include remediation of visual perception deficits. Until the end of the last decade, this set of approaches constituted the basis of almost all special education teacher training in mild handicaps. These figures are distressing primarily because this group of deficit-oriented methodologies have consistently proven to be of little benefit in remediating students' academic difficulties (Arter & Jenkins, 1979). That they are paired with research-based methodologies from general teacher education is a paradox and surely can be construed as a criticism of the foundation upon which these programs are based.

Perhaps implicitly, faculty members for special education have, by their choice of methodologies, dealt with the problem that students labeled mildly handicapped do not differ systematically from students in general education classrooms. In recognition of the absence of a well-defined population, the response of programs of teacher preparation in special education has been:

"We don't prepare teachers with substantially different methodologies; we just teach effective general teaching methodologies in separate programs at the university." This admission, reflected in analyses of program content, discloses a fundamental conceptual flaw in the categorical system that now requires separate preparation for its teachers.

In sum, the preparation of special education teachers emphasizes methodological approaches that fall either into the domain of general teacher education or the domain of ineffective and archaic special education methodologies. If teacher education systematically asserts its commitment to pedagogy, as it is now beginning to do, and offers preservice students preparation in methodologies that now are taught in many special education programs for teachers of the mildly handicapped, little will be left to warrant distinct programs. Training prospective teachers to use good pedagogy in small-group settings and calling such training "special" does not constitute a reasonable basis for a separate organizational structure at the university. But as long as distinct programs do exist, faculty members in general teacher education programs are likely to continue to transmit the philosophy that the limits of responsibility for classroom teaching are defined to a great extent by the existence of specialized personnel for students labeled mildly handicapped.

The metacognitive function. If metacognition is defined as "thinking about the process of thinking," then the metacognitive function of teaching can be defined as "thinking about the process of teaching" when classroom problems emerge. In addition to constraining the conceptualization of the pedagogical function of general teacher education, programs which prepare teachers for the mildly handicapped also constrain the metacognitive function of classroom teaching. One way to account for the mild learning and behavior problems classroom teachers encounter is to state that such problems develop

or persist because teachers fail to monitor, or self-appraise, their effect on the class as a way of determining problem sources. This view focuses concern on teachers' metacognitive skills. In an observational study of teachers, Erickson (1985) illustrates the problem as follows:

If they wondered about a particular student, as in wondering whether or not to refer a child for special education, the wondering did not take the form of a question like "What is it in this pattern of relationships, including my relationship with this child, that gives me the impression the child is mildly emotionally impaired?" Rather, the wondering would usually take the form of a question like "Is this child emotionally impaired or not?" (p. 8)

Thomas Good (1983), in his descriptions of active teaching, consistently asserts that one of the fundamental responsibilities of teaching is to "reteach" when the initial instructional approach has been unsuccessful; this concern is echoed in the reform statements cited earlier. Reteaching, however, can only occur if teachers regularly appraise their own teaching. As the system is now organized, teachers are systematically discouraged from giving serious consideration to the effects of their instructional or management processes on student learning and behavior; if the student is not learning readily, s/he is referred for possible special education services. Consequently, blame is levelled directly at the student, absolving the teacher from looking at the teaching process as a possible problem source, from considering alternative teaching approaches, and in general from accepting responsibility, at least initially, for problems that arise in the classroom.

How is "thinking about the teaching process" addressed during preservice preparation? While "reflective" teacher education programs do exist, these are few; even their graduates are trained in university settings that include separate programs preparing special education teachers and subsequently take positions in schools where such teachers exist. In general, the preparation of teachers does not routinely include self-appraisal and building awareness of the effect of the teacher's behavior on student performance and behavior.

Rather, programs teach preservice students to confer with and receive assistance from specialists; getting help is the model of problem solving, the preferred response to student problems. The act of referral starts the pattern of locating blame for the problem within the student and fails to encourage the teacher to reflect on the teaching process. This reaction is taught as the institutionalized norm and is considered to be appropriate professional behavior on the part of classroom teachers.

The institutionalization of the hierarchical "professional-to-client" model of problem solving is perhaps best exemplified by the recent interest special education faculty have shown in preparing special education resource teachers--the majority of whom work in the field of learning disabilities--to dispense "consultation" services to their colleagues in general classrooms. Prospective special education teachers are taught to help classroom teachers develop solutions to classroom problems, to participate appropriately in the special education identification and placement process, and to monitor student progress toward goals. In a hierarchical approach to classroom problem solving like this, prospective classroom teachers are trained to be the recipients of advice and not to begin the problem solving process from within. Their role as professional problem-solvers is disvalued from the outset; more perniciously, the system is set up to ignore their expertise and knowledge, as well as the knowledge of other classroom teachers, as a source of advice.

That is not to say that instruction in working cooperatively with personnel from other school-based professions is not important; what is problematic is the nature of the relationship about which preservice students receive such instruction. For example, one topic that continues to receive a great deal of attention in preservice coursework on mainstreaming in general teacher education is the preparation and use of individualized education

programs (IEPs). Preservice teachers learn that by law they are not required to participate in multidisciplinary staffings where student eligibility is determined, even when they have initiated a referral. They learn further that if they do succeed in being invited, they will have to work exceedingly hard to have their point of view given credence, even though as classroom teachers they may possess the best information about the student in question (Blankenship & Lilly, 1981). The sum of the message is that, as future classroom teachers, teacher education students can expect to be disenfranchised "members" of the process and not professional problem-solvers. The organization of special education, then, absorbs the metacognitive function of classroom teaching and serves as a disincentive for its inclusion in programs of teacher education.

Expectation for universal learning. A third function of teaching that is also affected by the existence of special education teacher preparation programs is the expectation that all students can learn. Teacher expectations are complex, but to some extent they clearly influence student learning in the classroom. For example, we know that teachers respond differently to students who appear to be high and low performers, and that they offer students for whom their expectations are high a better quality of instruction (Good & Brophy, 1984). One of the most important goals of reform in teacher education to ensure that prospective teachers understand the effects of their expectations and "learn to examine and control their own behavior in order to ensure that they are not endangering the growth of students" (Berliner, 1985).

Given convincing evidence about the role of teacher expectations, it is reasonable to expect that classroom teachers understand and accept their responsibility to deprive no child of the benefit of their high expectations and to treat each child with the instructional respect traditionally accorded to high achievers. Yet during preservice training, prospective classroom

teachers are apt instead to learn the limitations on their abilities to engender universal learning. They learn, for example, how to identify students who supposedly have "real" mild handicapping conditions and for whom, theoretically, they do not possess instructional skills that are sufficiently specialized. They learn that organizational variables exist which limit not only their assumptions about how to teach, but also their sense of who is "teachable" in the normal course of classroom events. As a result, they develop a differentiated set of expectations, one for those students who belong in the regular classroom, and another for those who apparently do not. And even if an ideal general teacher education training program existed which insured that its graduates were in control of their expectations, the graduate, once employed, might begin to ask: "But if this child is 'handicapped,' can I really expect him to learn like the others?" Even with the best training it would be difficult to overcome the pressing effects of workplace conditions that permit esoteric categories of handicapping conditions and call for the specialized set of skills that only certain teachers are apparently trained to provide.

Dependence: Teacher Education's Hidden Curriculum

In summary, the existence of special programs for teachers of students labeled mildly handicapped affects the reform of general teacher education by constraining the definition of the professional roles and responsibilities of classroom teachers. The major problem is the dependence mentality that is created by the existence of special education teacher training programs. This dependence mentality constitutes a powerful hidden curriculum for graduates of general and special teacher education programs alike. It is clearly sanctioned by the existence of a special education university training system that, for prospective teachers of the mildly handicapped, continues to prepare them to draw off students whose needs may actually be best served inside

general classrooms. The issue of dependence per se is not as problematic when the skills of specialists are clearly different from other professionals, but in the case teachers of the mildly handicapped, the demarcations are not clear and the overlap is apparent.

Institutionalized dependence extends also into the manner in which various requirements for completion of special education coursework at the university are met. Special education faculty typically are responsible for delivering coursework in characteristics of exceptionality and instructional strategies for working with mainstreamed students. Although in some institutions these courses may be taught conjointly with general teacher educators and special educators, there is a sense in which the content "belongs" to special education by virtue of its connection to a "separate" and legitimate discipline, one which is thought of as being foreign to faculty members in general education.

In an organizational structure that rewards the reduction of heterogeneity by routinely removing to special education the responsibility for students who are referred, the depressed motivation of general teacher education to transmit to its graduates both the methodological expertise and the professional expectation that educational success for greater ranges of students is within their grasp should come as no surprise. Sarason and Doris (1979) argue that the presence of special education programs as options "effectively short circuit" the development of alternative solutions based in general education (p. 385). In defense of their position, special educators may be tempted to lay blame on general teacher education for neglecting to do its job. Special educators may argue that it became necessary for special education teachers to be skilled in general pedagogy to make up for deficiencies in general classroom teaching and in the preparation of general classroom teachers. It must be remembered, however, that to date there is no

evidence that special education has done such an outstanding job that students routinely return to their general education classrooms. Rather, the tendency is for students to remain clients of the special education system. Further, if university training in skills for promoting successful mainstreaming had been highly effective, would we not see after a decade of such efforts less criticism of general classroom teaching than we have in the education reports of past three years? In the search for explanations, it must be remembered that classroom teachers work in a complex, demanding bureaucracy; the "laws" of survival in any such bureaucracy encourage using all resources available to adapt most easily to the pressures it creates (see, for example, Michael Lipsky's discussion of street-level bureaucracy, 1976). The natural response of teachers who work in a system where a consistent structure exists to ease the workload will be to depend upon that structure and to use the loopholes it creates in spite of the fundamental flaws its use may represent.

Disciplinary Isolation as a Professional Constraint on Reform

In the last decade, research on teaching and the education of teachers has emerged as a focal point for much of the reform effort in teacher education (see, for example, Stallings, 1985). Faculty engaging in this research have been located primarily in research units devoted to the study of general teacher education and teaching and in university departments of teacher education, elementary education, and curriculum and instruction--in short, the traditional departments in which classroom teachers are prepared. Similarly, research in the preparation of special education teachers and effective teaching in special education has been located in departments of special education. The disciplinary structure which separates the two groups is an organizational fact of life at the university.

How does such disciplinary isolation affect efforts to improve the preparation of classroom teachers? Alpert (1985) has characterized the

current structure of multipurpose universities as a linear model in which "the quality of the institution is seen as the separately measured quality of its departments" (p. 247). He states:

The assessment of academic quality is identified with the quality of the research in the various disciplines and professional fields and is carried out through the process of peer group evaluation. The most prevalent measure of departmental quality has come to be its prestige among peer groups, that is, comparative standing in a national ordering assembled by colleagues in the discipline. For many academics, the improvement of prestige has become the departmental mission itself. (p. 247)

He argues further that interdisciplinary efforts among departments are lacking primarily because the mission of the university has become, in fact, the mission of the singular departments. As a consequence, both monetary and prestige-related rewards are a function of activity and recognition in the disciplinary community, and interdisciplinary work does not fit easily into this model. Also, once an area of interest is established, it can quickly acquire the disciplinary trappings which are necessary for professional survival at the university.

The dichotomy between faculty members who are interested in the preparation of general classroom and special education teachers exemplifies the problems that can occur when rigid disciplinary structures govern the rewards and recognition offered in higher education. In this regard, two issues are worthy of consideration: the nature of dialogue between teacher educators in general and special education, and the allocation of resources for research, dissemination and training.

The Nature of Dialogue Among Teacher Educators

Where do faculty members talk about teacher education? Most logically, according to Alpert's analysis, they talk to members of their own disciplines through their professional research and development activities. If substantive reform is to be achieved in teacher education, it would seem

logical that those who work in the field would benefit from having a unified focus on the dilemmas they face. Among those who work in general teacher education, such a focus was accomplished with the establishment in 1984 of a division for the study of teacher education in the American Educational Research Association, which complemented the existence for many years of various professional organizations and publications devoted to teacher education.

The preparation of special education teachers is likewise a focal point for many faculty members in departments of special education, and disciplinary outlets also exist for professional consideration of their work. For example, within the Council for Exceptional Children the Teacher Education Division (TED) exists specifically for the study of teacher education, and its journal, Teacher Education and Special Education, provides special educators with a within-discipline outlet for publication. The fact that this subdivision was created within special education is illustrative of the strength of disciplinary commitment in the sense Alpert described. While it would probably have been more logical for those special educators with interests in the preparation of teachers to have looked toward general teacher education for professional involvement, location within the special education community provided greater assurance of professional control and professional recognition by peers within special education, and thus, greater likelihood of prestige.

The existence of separate professional groups to study the general and special preparation of teachers reinforces the impression that the preparation of the two is unrelated and differs in fundamental ways. For special educators, the locus for the study of teacher education is perceived to be their own field, and not in teacher education per se. As a result, dialogue is affected in two ways, one practical and one ideological.

Practical issues and dialogue. Practically speaking, it is difficult for faculty members to retain active status and keep current in the wealth of scholarship emanating from the various organizations and publications that address teacher education. Professional membership, subscription, and attendance at professional meetings all represent additional professional and financial commitments; to some degree it is an occupational hazard endemic to academic life that knowledge is circumscribed by professional membership, scholarly reading, and professional activity through which research is dispersed. While as a practical issue this may seem trivial, the resulting absence of dialogue is particularly problematic as it relates to teacher educators.

Current knowledge is not mutually understood, and when research does converge, as it has in the area of teacher effectiveness, faculty members are most likely to read only in the context of their own discipline, missing valuable applications in other, similar contexts. More importantly, current debate in the each of the "disciplines" which may have serious implications for their relationship and for the preparation of teachers also is not shared. As a consequence, for example, the intensive debate within special education regarding the legitimacy of learning disabilities appears almost exclusively in the literature of special education and is protected from dissemination in the education community at large, depriving it of an adequate understanding of the depth of the dilemma and the prevalence of its discussion in the special education literature.

The lack of dialogue between special and general educators has emerged only periodically as a concern. In the mid-1970s, the implementation of mainstreaming caused a great deal of discussion over the proper relationship of teacher education in both fields (see, for example, Grosenick & Reynolds, 1978). More recently, Warner (1985) suggested that both special educators and

curriculum theorists could profit from mutual discussion related to theoretical bases of special education and the nature of disability respectively. Sapon-Shevin (1985) and Pugach (1985) analyzed the absence of reference to special education in the spate of national education reports that surfaced during 1983 and 1984. At the level of scholarship, however, the lack of interaction has not generally been seen as a particularly serious problem on the part of general or special education.

The suppression of opportunities for dialogue is exemplified most ironically by an author's note following an article by Lorrie Shepard (1983) that appeared in Educational Measurement: Issues and Practice entitled, "The Role of Measurement in Educational Policy: Lessons from the Identification of Learning Disabilities." The article draws upon the current debate over the identification of learning disabilities to illustrate the relationship between principles of educational measurement and ethical decision-making regarding the labeling of children. It closes with the following note: "NCME members are urged to share this article with colleagues in the field of special education" (p. 8). Thus, a non-special educator writes from a strong research base about problems related to one of the most fundamental dilemmas in special education, yet it is clear that it will only be under extraordinary circumstances that special educators will be exposed to this work, primarily by virtue of the disciplinary-bound nature of the article's location and audience.

Currently, and to the credit of professional groups concerned with the general and special education of teachers, deliberate efforts are being made to find ways of working cooperatively. However, this places the expenditure of effort and resources first at the level of organizational communication and formal inter-organizational activity, and only secondarily at the level of the communication of research and development activities. At the level of

practicality, then, researchers do not share a common body of knowledge, and the potential for mutual understanding is seriously obscured by the constraints of disciplinary preference.

Ideological issues and dialogue. How is dialogue affected at the level of educational ideology? The relative absence of interaction results in reification of the belief that the training of special education teachers is a esoteric concern that can benefit little from identification with general teacher education. In making the choice to isolate themselves, special educators interested in teacher preparation show their continued reluctance to identify points of mutual concern and to associate with the education community as a whole.

One consequence of this act of isolation is that the training of special educators continues to be thought of by general teacher educators as primarily behavioral, such that what may be useful in preparing special education teachers is likely to have little relevance for the preparation of general classroom teachers. While methodologies traditionally favored by special education teachers have also been found to be effective by general teacher educators, they may implicitly be valued less by general teacher educators and be accorded a less favorable position in the literature, and subsequently, in practice.

Specific evidence of the inconsistencies in describing particular methodologies appears in at least some of the language used in reviews of research on effective teaching strategies. It is interesting to note, for example, that in introducing such concepts as time-on-task, reviewers from general teacher education tend first to introduce the generality that the concept is without question useful and good. Hawley and Rosenholtz (1984), for example, state:

Regardless of the type of task arrangements and management systems, the major intervening variable between teacher instructional behavior and student achievement is academic learning time--the amount of time students spend engaged in academic tasks that they perform with high success rates...." (p. 19)

In contrast, in describing the use of rewards in the same review, the authors show marked reluctance to present this issue in a positive light. Unlike the introduction to time-on-task, the following paragraph is decidedly negative in its initial description of the value of positive reinforcement in the classroom:

An additional aspect of classroom management, although not conventionally found in management discussions, is the nature of student rewards. We include this topic here because it appears that students who are not properly reinforced for their efforts will not exhibit those behaviors that lead ultimately to skill mastery. The proposition that rewarding student achievement in appropriate ways will bring about still greater effort seems logical enough (emphasis added). (Hawley & Rosenholtz, 1984, p. 24)

First we learn that it is unusual even to include the topic in a review of effective teaching, and then, that as a principle, rewarding student performance belongs at the level of common sense. Ironically, the "common sense" of a variable like "time-on-task" is not expressed.

Good and Brophy (1984) similarly spend two paragraphs describing in detail all the pitfalls associated with the use of praise before stating precisely the value of effective praise in the classroom:

Effective praise calls attention to students developing learning progress or skill mastery. It expresses appreciation for their accomplishments in ways that call attention to the efforts or accomplishments themselves rather than their role in pleasing the teacher. This helps students to learn to attribute their efforts to their own intrinsic motivation rather than to external manipulation by the teacher and to attribute their successes to their own abilities and efforts rather than to dependency on the teacher, lack of challenge in the task, or sheer luck. (p. 193)

The danger of such general biases is that researchers may systematically, though inadvertently, present research emerging from their own discipline in a favorable light and present research emerging from special education in a less favorable one. As a result, preservice students may come away with

preferences for particular approaches that may be biased as well. Additionally, faculty may show bias against using potentially beneficial research methodologies in the study of teacher education, reasoning that such methodologies, like their pedagogical counterparts, belong to special education alone. For example, single subject research design has been largely ignored as a potential tool in the research on improving specific teaching behaviors, although it is particularly well-suited to studying the improvement of specific teaching behaviors.

The loss of breadth both in the training of teachers and the study of that process as a result of such biases deprives reform efforts of the full complement of approaches in its search for improving the quality of teaching. The loss of power in research is mutual; special education persists in its failure to benefit from the large and convincing body of research in teacher education, and general teacher education fails to give credence to those approaches which special education has come to "own."

The Allocation of Resources for Teacher Education

A second effect of disciplinary isolation is the manner in which resources are allocated for the study of teacher education, the dissemination of data, and the direct training of prospective teachers. This issue includes both the overt allocation of monies and internal decisions within professional disciplinary groups to make financial and human resource commitments to various aspects of teacher education.

Resources for preservice programs. Currently, general programs of teacher education are funded by universities and colleges. Research associated with the preparation of classroom teachers is funded in the conventional manner through the granting of funds nationally by agencies like the National Institute of Education. In contrast, the preparation of special education teachers is underwritten directly by the federal government in the

form of personnel preparation grants funded by the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services in the Department of Education; while their preference is to fund masters level programs only, undergraduate programs are occasionally funded as well. In other words, it is only the preparation of special education teachers that is deemed to be an appropriate teacher education activity for which the federal government should disburse funding directly.

What level of financial commitment does the federal government actually make to the preparation of teachers for populations labeled mildly handicapped? In the 1985 summary of new and continuing grants for personnel preparation across all handicapping conditions (Department of Education Grants Management System, 1985), an analysis of titles resulted in the identification of at least 82 projects associated with the preservice preparation of teachers for mildly handicapped populations, and primarily for learning disabilities. This is only an approximation of the total number of projects in mild handicaps, since many of the project titles were too general to be classified accurately (for example, "Preparation of Special Educators: Training Personnel for Education of the Handicapped"). For these 82 projects alone, approximately \$5,275,300 was expended, an average of approximately \$64,000 per project. Traditionally, personnel preparation grants in special education are funded for a three year period; departments which are funded for this purpose thus receive an average of approximately \$192,000 every three years.

Federal funding for the preparation of teachers for identifiably handicapped populations is not an unreasonable commitment on the part of the federal government, especially since the impetus for such a commitment followed years of overt neglect of those populations by the education system. However, if the legitimacy of the categories associated with mild handicapping conditions is at question, the wisdom of expending upwards of five million

dollars per year for the preparation of teachers in these categories also deserves close examination. In the analysis, it must be remembered that these figures represent only the actual funds that have been obligated, not the unmeasured cost in person-hours associated with proposal reviews and grant management and monitoring.

In the context of the relationship between the general and special preparation of teachers, what is critical to understand is that the existence of a federal grant system for the preparation of teachers for the students labeled mildly handicapped strengthens the professional cohesiveness of special education in the coin of the realm that is valued by the university community. It provides opportunities for faculty members to engage in the review process, to attend grant-related functions, in short, to participate in those activities that readily gain one status within one's own discipline. As such, the special funding of preservice preparation in categories of special education that are not highly defensible perpetuates the isolation of interaction between the general and special preparation of teachers, even though their students may engage in many of the same types of preservice activity.

Ironically, the Office of Special Education also funds grants for "The Preparation of Regular Educators." In the funding priority notice appearing in the Federal Register (November 20, 1985), the activities of these grants are limited to supporting "projects for preservice and inservice training of regular educators, including supervisors and administrators, to assist with the identification and delivery of special education and related services to children with learning disabilities and other handicapping conditions" (p. 47797). This set of grants well illustrates the hierarchical nature of the relationship between special and general teacher education as seen by special education professionals and is another source by which those who

prepare special education teachers identify themselves professionally. Further, these grants clearly show the profound influence of the increased numbers of students identified as learning disabled; it appears to be the major premise for the existence of the monies.

In sum, the bulk of resources for the preparation of special education teachers is focused on categories of mild handicapping conditions, precisely those categories which are least convincing in their need for separate programs of teacher education. Additionally, the existence of federal programs acts as a focus for professional identification and utilizes resources for training that in many ways duplicate the preparation of general classroom teachers. As a source of support, the federal government is not regularly available for the preparation of classroom teachers. People interested in reform ought seriously to question the defensibility of federal funding for the direct preparation of teachers of the mildly handicapped, whose roles and responsibilities are not unlike those of general classroom teachers.

Professional allocation of resources. Resources within professional organizations for dissemination of research are represented by the content of professional meetings and also by the various journals in which faculty members read, review, and publish. Special education allocates resources for the study of teacher education primarily through the Teacher Education Division of the Council for Exceptional Children. In the call for papers for the 1986 conference, topics to be addressed include, among others: recruitment, admissions and retention; faculty incentive and support systems; results of research in teacher training; practicum planning; practicum supervision; linkages with public schools; and program evaluation, (TED, 1986). This call might just as easily have originated from an organization devoted to the study of general teacher education, and as such, it is

reasonable to question why issues of such critical and timely importance to teacher education as a whole must be isolated at a small, single discipline conference.

In contrast, the journal which represents the outlet for the study of teacher education in special education appears to have a different focus. An analysis of articles appearing in Teacher Education and Special Education from 1980-1985 illustrates that difference as represented by the nature of topics addressed. Of 182 articles reviewed, 14 percent were devoted to inservice, including inservice of general educators for mainstreaming; 13 percent focused on effective teaching and teacher education practices; 12 percent on competencies needed by general educators to implement mainstreaming; 10 percent on descriptions of programs; and 10 percent on policy issues related to the organization and categorization of special education teachers. Six articles, or three percent, addressed general aspects of teacher education policy issues such as accreditation by NCATE. An additional 17 percent of the articles addressed miscellaneous topics including multivariate analysis, issues in referral and placement, the future of TED, state reporting of child abuse, the economic realities of special education, and parenting skills.

Nominally, then, the contribution of this journal is its general focus on all aspects of the preparation of special education teachers. However, only 13 percent of the articles directly address effective teaching and the training of teachers; of equal concern is "helping" general education through the problem of mainstreaming. The journal appears to serve only a moderate function as an outlet for the study of teacher education; more than this role, it is a means for communication among special educators on a variety of topics both related and unrelated to teacher education. The preference for program description, for example, is a way of sharing teacher education information

but does not represent the study of teacher education or the analysis of its related policy issues.

Given the apparently disparate functions the teacher education branch of special education plays, the question must be raised as to whether the internal allocation of resources in special education is resulting in the most efficient contribution to knowledge in teacher education. According to the call for papers, special educators appear to be interested in solving the same problems that concern general teacher educators. The resources expended for this effort in terms of both financial allocations and human commitment result in the unnecessary duplication of opportunities for professional reporting and also isolate them within single disciplines. Resource allocation for the publication of the journal is small--the cost is only approximately \$17,000 for 1984-85 (TED, 1986). But the human expenditure of editorial effort and the effort of peer reviewers is far greater. And more importantly, those studies which do relate directly to improving teacher education are isolated from their natural audience, while those that do not inevitably lead one to question the journal's fundamental purpose.

Special Education Categories and the Problem of Reform

To achieve reform in teacher education, reformers should begin by reducing confusion. One obvious source of confusion is the system of university preparation for special education teachers for students labeled mildly handicapped. This confusion is best reflected in the fact that while a great deal of overlap exists in the methodological orientations of general and special programs of teacher education and in the kinds of children they serve--resulting in artificial limits on the views general teacher educators have of their tasks--virtually no overlap exists in professional communication and knowledge sharing. Reform is thus constrained in two ways: first, by the hidden curriculum imposed by the existence of teacher education programs in

mild handicaps, and second by the isolated disciplinary structure of general and special education.

The viewpoint presented in this paper is that the burden of proof is on special education professionals at the university to defend 1) the uniqueness of the content, scope, and clientele of their programs for teachers of the mildly handicapped, and 2) their reluctance to identify professionally with teacher education as a whole. In response to the questions raised at the outset, "What ends are served?" and "In whose best interest?", the logical conclusion to be drawn from this analysis is that the interests of the special education establishment, as represented by professionals at the university, are being served by the existence of separate programs for the preparation of teachers for the mildly handicapped.

For example, it is special education faculty who retain status based upon programs whose target clientele are not identifiably handicapped. It is these same programs that receive external funding to support their teacher education efforts. Special education faculty benefit from the psychology of dependence they have created among general teacher educators, since their graduates are assured both a place and a student population based upon the understandings or assumptions classroom teachers are taught to value. And it is special education faculty who benefit from the existence of their own professional organization devoted to the study of teacher education and who as a result gain prestige within their field, isolating themselves as a result from the knowledge base of general teacher education.

What solutions are appropriate? In the context of this discussion, it is not likely that initiating dialogue alone will solve the problem, since dialogue will not address the basic problem of implicit dependence upon special education. Rather, what is at question is whether separate teacher education in categories of mild handicapping conditions is defensible at all.

If reform is to be achieved in the preparation of classroom teachers, the lines of responsibility must be drawn clearly and without confusion in terms of the children they serve, the skills they must possess, and the professional responsibilities they undertake as classroom teachers. Faculty in general teacher education can then reach a clear understanding of their roles, unencumbered by the preparation of special education teachers whose roles are not clear and who fail to identify with the education community at large. In the presence of a special education structure that systematically obscures the definition of classroom teaching, reforming general teacher education will at best be an elusive goal.

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Footnotes

1. The current inflation in the category of learning disabilities (Gerber, 1984), the overreferral and identification of students through existing placement procedures (Christenson, Ysseldyke, & Algozzine, 1982), and the overrepresentation of minority students as learning disabled (Tucker, 1984) bear out the fact that students who fail to exhibit objective handicapping conditions are regularly routed to the special education system.
2. Eighty-nine percent of the 100 programs surveyed responded to the questionnaire.

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